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EXAMINER

NGO, NGUYEN HOANG

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

This communication is in response to the amendment of 4/18/2008. All changes made to the Claims have been entered. Accordingly, Claims 1-19 are currently pending in the application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

3. Claims 1-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over ExtremeWare Software User Guide, by Extreme Networks, Inc, in view of Sistanizadeh et al. (US 6963575), hereinafter referred to as ExtremeWare and Sistanizadeh.

Regarding claim 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 12, 13, 14, ExtremeWare Networks, Inc. discloses of an ESRP (router protocol) that allows multiple switches to provide redundant routing services to users (a failover transition system (redundant routing services) for a network having a dual overlay ring topology with a core and plurality of ports (switches) communicating over a VLAN, Chapter 10, Page 10-1 and figure 10-7 on 10-11).

ExtremeWare further discloses;

of one switch that actively provides layer 2 switching for each VLAN and that the switch performing the forwarding for a particular VLAN is considered the “master” for that VLAN (a first switch having a master mode and a standby mode, said first switch running only a layer 2 protocol and configured to provide switching between said ports (forwarding), while in said master mode, 10-2);

of other participating switches for the VLAN are in standby mode (a second switch having a master mode and a standby mode, said second switch running only a layer 2 protocol and configured to providing switching between said ports while in said master mode, wherein said second switch is in said standby mode when said first switch is in said master mode, and said second switch is in said master mode when said first switch is in said standby mode (relinquishes status, 10-2 and 10-4);

that if any of the configured tracking mechanisms fail, the master ESRP switch relinquishes status as master and remains in standby mode for as long as the tracking

mechanism continues to fail (wherein said first switch is configured, upon a detection of a network failure, to restart auto-negotiation of said ports, and to transition to said standby mode; and wherein said second switch is configured, upon said detection of a network failure, to transition to said master mode, 10-4).

that switches, being ESRP-aware, allow traffic within the VLAN to fail-over quickly, as they will sense when a master/slave transition occurs and flush FDB entries associated with the switches (wherein upon said configuration of said second switch to transition to said master mode (transition), flushing a layer 2 forwarding database (FDB), 10-17 – 10-18) and that each FDB entry consists of the MAC address of the device (a layer 2 forwarding database, 7-1).

ExtremeWare however fails to specifically disclose the limitation of rebroadcast for a new path once the ports flushes a layer 2 forwarding database. ExtremeWare however discloses that Dynamic FDB (forwarding data base) entries associated with the VLAN are flushed once the change is committed (6-14) and that entries in the database are removed if, after a period of time, the device has not transmitted (7-2). Extremeware further discloses that the switches allow traffic within the VLAN to fail-over quickly, as they will sense when a master/slave transition occurs and flush FDB entries (upon said configuration of sad second switch to transition to said master mode (master/slave transition), 10-17 - 10-18). Thus it would have been obvious to a person skilled in the art to have one of said ports flush a layer 2 forwarding database and rebroadcasts for a new path if that specific switch has not transmitted for some time (standby mode) in

order to efficiently determining new paths in order to provide redundant routing services to users in case of a network failure.

ExtremeWare further fails to specifically disclose a wide-area fiber optic network having a dual overlay ring topology within a core and to rebroadcasts for a new path over said wide-area fiber-optic network. ExtremeWare however discloses that ExtremeWare is a full-featured software operating system that is designed to run on the Blackdiamond, Alpine, and Summit families of Gigabit Ethernet switches (page 1-1) and further discloses that the Extreme switch comprises a Gigabit fiber port (B-5) and that a multi-mode fiber or a single mode fiber are used (B-6). Applicant further specifies of Multi-Mode Fiber to be a fiber-optic cable with a large transmission core (page 25 lines 1-5 and page 8 lines 20-23 of Specification), thus providing the motivation that ESUG suggests of having a fiber optic network (as argued by applicant). In a similar field of endeavor, Sistanizadeh discloses of a regional area network including a number of ring networks and redundant optical fiber ring networks (wide-area fiber optic network, col2 lines 25-40), and further discloses that the switches used, are Summit data switches and Blackdiamond switches from Extreme Networks (col8 lines 11-51). It would have thus been obvious to a person skilled in the art to incorporate the concept of having the network as disclosed by ExtremeWare be a wide-area fiber optic network, as disclosed by Sistanizadeh in order to efficiently provide redundancy in a network comprising optic rings.

Regarding claim 2, 11, ExtremeWare discloses said VLAN is part of an Ethernet network (Ethernet switches, 1-1).

Regarding claim 6, 7, 15, 16, ExtremeWare discloses said ports utilize ARP (switch supports ARP, 11-5).

Regarding claim 8, 9, 17, and 18, ExtremeWare discloses said network failure is detected using ping track (ESRP ping tracking, 10-4-10-5)/ port track (if no active ports remain, the switch automatically relinquishes master status and remains in standby mode, 10-4).

Regarding claim 19, ExtremeWare discloses a maximum of four switches participate in providing redundant services to a single VLAN, and that one switch is the Master while the other switches are in standby mode (10-2, 10-11).

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-19 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

2. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP

§ 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to NGUYEN NGO whose telephone number is (571)272-8398. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7am - 3:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Firmin Backer can be reached on (571)272-6703. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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